

PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES OF OCTOBER 10, 2005

2005-0622 – Centex Homes [Applicant] **Dubrovnik Properties LLC** [Owner]: Application for related proposals on a 4.8-acre site (Oasis Mobile Home Manor) located at **610 Alberta Avenue** (near Hollenbeck Ave) in an RMH (Residential Mobile Home) Zoning District. (Negative Declaration) (APN: 323-33-062) GC;

- **General Plan Amendment** from RMH (Mobile Home Park) to RLM (Residential Low Medium)
- **Rezone** from MHP (Mobile Home Park) to R-2/PD (Low-Medium Density Residential/Planned Development) Zoning District,
- **Special Development Permit** to allow 55 single-family homes, and
- **Tentative Map** to subdivide one lot into 55 lots and one common lot.

Gerri Caruso, Principal Planner, presented the staff report. Staff commented that this is an infill site and though it is almost five acres, it is a deep and narrow site that makes it challenging to design single-family detached units and meet the City requirements. She also acknowledged that the applicant has worked to address staff's direction on this project. The applicant provided a design with revisions to the private street cross section, today, and a copy is provided on the dais. Staff has reviewed the revised design and maintains that the street needs to be 24 feet wide as recommended in the staff report. This would allow the eight-foot wide parking as required by Code to allow pedestrian access, emergency access and maneuverability for solid waste trucks. To accommodate the street width, staff is recommending two housing units be removed from the project to allow for additional parking rather than reduce the front yards. Staff is recommending approval of the project with conditions as stated in the staff report. Staff is requesting to add one condition to clarify that the guest parking needs to meet the City minimum dimension standards for parallel street parking which are a minimum of eight feet wide and 22 feet long per parking space.

Comm. Sulser referred to page 7 of the report regarding low-income units considered and asked staff to comment on the section that reads "potentially give priority for these units to residents of Oasis Mobile Manor." Ms. Caruso said that there are seven Below Market Rate (BMR) units being provided, but that they would not be very low-income units. The applicant had previously submitted plans that included very low-income apartments, but after being reviewed by the Housing Officer, it was determined that rents for these units would not be low enough to provide housing for Oasis Mobile Manor residents over the long term. The low-income rental units were dropped from the project at staff's direction and the applicant instead provided standard BMR unit plans. Comm. Sulser referred to Attachment B, Condition of Approval (COA) 11.D regarding guest-parking spaces and asked staff how the parking would be enforced. Ms. Caruso said that the condition would have to be added to the CC & Rs (Conditions,

Covenants and Restrictions) and that the parking would be self-policing. If residents started complaining to the City, then action could be taken.

Comm. Babcock asked that since there is no requirement in the Code requiring guest parking, how did staff determine that 14 guest-parking spaces should be included. Ms. Caruso said staff tried to provide 50%, or one space per every two units, but that this was too many to physically fit into the project. 14 seemed to be the highest possible number of guest-parking spaces that could be included in the project. Comm. Babcock and staff further discussed how staff arrived at the 14 guest-parking spaces giving examples of other types of developments and how this condition was a blending of requirements. Staff is recommending the project be reduced by two units to accommodate additional on-site guest parking. Comm. Babcock asked how many guest-parking spaces would result if the units were reduced by one. Ms. Caruso said about 4 parking spaces would result. Comm. Babcock and staff further discussed possible scenarios that might result in the desired guest-parking spaces, including eliminating spaces on the interior loop and discussed how many guest-parking spaces have been included in other recent residential developments.

Comm. Simons asked if there had been any discussion of narrowing the width of the road and providing “truck skirts” for emergency vehicles, rather than widening the road and reducing the number of units. Ms. Caruso said staff discussed the design proposed by applicant which was a 20 foot total width that included the four-foot pedestrian path. The design was reviewed by the staff of the Department of Public Safety, the Traffic Division and the Solid Waste Division and it was strongly encouraged that the 24-foot wide street would best meet the City’s needs so solid waste trucks could maneuver and emergency vehicles had appropriate access to the site. Comm. Simons recommended that staff propose a study issue regarding road widths for residential development addressing smart design for roads, including road diets for residential streets.

Chair Hungerford referred to page 13 of the report regarding useable open space and said the Code requires a minimum of 500 square feet per unit, yet these units only have 400 to 450 square feet of useable space per unit. Ms. Caruso said that the units are actually providing more than 400 to 450 square feet due to easements and other yard area, landscape and patio areas, but that the areas are smaller than the minimum guideline of 15 feet to be applied to the requirement.

Chair Hungerford opened the public hearing.

Jeff Jacobs, applicant with Centex Homes in San Ramon, acknowledged Ms. Caruso and staff for the assistance given on this project for the past year. The process included the formal closure of the Oasis Mobile Home Manor and the relocation of the 45 residents, 40 who have since relocated and many that have been able to upgrade their living situation. After the closure, the focus became

the use of the land. He agrees with staff that this is a long narrow site and that it has been a challenge to work through the design process. He presented a PowerPoint presentation showing pictures of the site and many of the development options that have been considered over the past year. He said he feels like Centex has developed a good understanding of what staff and the City want for new development. Centex is very excited about the plans being presented tonight. He addressed some of the concerns about parking spaces including on-street parking, sidewalks, different paving materials, and driveway dimensions and said that Centex generally agrees with everything in the staff report except the street width issue and reduction of units. He commented that the Centex Homes logo says "built to a higher standard" and that this is more of a mission statement. He said that Centex Homes would look forward to building in Sunnyvale.

Emily Bennato, with the Dahlin Group Architects, provided an overview of the project and concurred with staff and Mr. Jacobs that this site was a challenge due to the site being an infill project and the physical shape. She said the proposed floor plans address the outdoor space, the streetscape is highly articulated, there are a variety of roof forms and porches, and the style is a contemporary version of a Craftsman elevation. She said the style lends itself to a bold color scheme and commented that they have to make revisions based on input from the recent study session with the Commissioners.

Comm. Sulser asked why the applicant preferred single-family homes over a multi-family option when this is a circumstance involving rezoning and could have been considered for higher-density residential. Mr. Jacobs said that after reviewing many different variations for the site that Centex feels they have arrived at the best product for this site and that some of the higher-density plans considered were not very interesting on this particular site.

Arthur Schwartz, a Sunnyvale resident, expressed his concern over the high-density for the project and said that the density is twice as high as the adjacent homes. He said he was concerned about the open space and asked if the CC & Rs are lifetime or will they expire.

Mr. Jacobs addressed the concerns of Mr. Schwartz, clarifying that the density of this project is actually reduced from the previous density. In regard to the open space, he said that the previous mobile homes were one story and had a lot more paved area than the proposed two-story homes. He said he welcomed the input. He said that the CC & Rs are recorded against the land and a homeowners association will be formed so there is protection on into the future.

Chair Hungerford closed the public hearing.

Chair Hungerford asked staff for clarification on the pedestrian path issue and whether there would be sidewalks or pedestrian paths. Ms. Caruso said that

there would be a path in the street delineated by a different material and separated from the street material by small raised domes and a stripe as required by the Building Code. She said the path would go around the interior block of houses. Chair Hungerford asked if there was parking on the interior side. Ms. Caruso said that is yet to be seen based on the Planning Commission's decision, but as proposed there is some parking to the inside of the pedestrian path and a car would have to cross over the pedestrian path to park.

Comm. Babcock asked staff for feedback on what other alternatives there are to the guest-parking spaces as she would rather see less guest parking required than the constant staggering of the parking and pathways as she feels this parking design is degrading the project. She said she likes that the project is for single-family homes rather than multi-family homes. She asked if the guest parking requirement could be reduced without reducing the number of units. Ms. Caruso said most likely guest parking would be reduced on the interior loop which would reduce six parking spaces and that between now and the City Council hearing staff could explore with the applicant about finding spaces that could be put on the outer curb.

Vice Chair Fussell said it seems the townhomes guest parking standard is being applied to these single-family homes. Ms. Ryan said with a standard single-family home the guest parking is on the street. In an R-2 zoning district where units are on small lots, staff felt that some unallocated space should be provided for guest spaces. Vice Chair Fussell commented that it seems the Commission is in a position of choosing between an opportunity for homeownership housing units and guest parking. Ms. Ryan said there are trade offs as this is not a single-family zoning district and the density is slightly higher.

Vice Chair Fussell moved to recommend to City Council to adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration; adopt a resolution to amend the General Plan from Mobile Home Park to Low-Medium Density Residential; introduce an Ordinance to Rezone 610 Alberta Avenue from Mobile Home Park to R-2/PD Zoning District; and approve the Special Development Permit and Tentative Map with modified conditions, to delete Condition of Approval 1. F that reads, "The project shall be reduced by two units to reduce the FAR to 57% and to accommodate on-site guest parking." Chair Hungerford seconded the motion.

Comm. Babcock offered a Friendly Amendment to eliminate the guest parking on the interior loop and leave the guest parking on the exterior loop as is. She also requested that staff explore the possibility of finding spaces on the exterior loop to come up to the minimum of eight guest parking spaces while keeping the 55 units. The maker and seconder of the motion accepted the Friendly Amendment.

Vice Chair Fussell said this site is an interesting property and finding the right design has required consideration of many variations, but that this design looks like the best solution. He said the Commission is weighing whether to have two additional units or guest parking and in this case he feels the homeownership opportunity is a priority over the guest parking.

Comm. Babcock said she agrees with Vice Chair Fussell and feels this is nice project. She said she is pleased to see the single-family homes proposed with high standards. She said the extra units take precedence over the guest parking.

Comm. Simons said he will be supporting the motion and responded to the public comment that this is a high-density project. He said that this is higher density for a single-family home project, but that it is still a single-family home project and that this is an excellent alternative and a lot of the issues have been worked out.

Chair Hungerford said he was pleased with the elimination of the parking on the interior loop to avoid the conflict of the parking and the pedestrian path. He said he feels the reduction of the guest parking is a good trade off to have the additional two housing units.

Final Action:

ACTION: Vice Chair Fussell made a motion on item 2005-0622 to recommend to City Council to adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration; adopt a resolution to amend the General Plan from Mobile Home Park to Low-Medium Density Residential; introduce an Ordinance to Rezone 610 Alberta Avenue from Mobile Home Park to an R-2/PD Zoning District; and approve the Special Development Permit and Tentative Map with modified conditions, to delete Condition of Approval 1.F that reads, "The project shall be reduced by two units to reduce the FAR to 57% and to accommodate on-site guest parking," and to eliminate the guest parking on the interior loop and leave the guest parking on the exterior loop as is, with staff to explore the possibility to come up with a minimum of eight guest parking spaces on the exterior loop while keeping the 55 units. Comm. Hungerford seconded.

Motion carried 6-0, Comm. Moylan absent.

This item is scheduled to be heard by City Council October 25, 2005.